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Annual Report of the Municipal Officers of the Town of Peru, For The Year Ending February 20, 1900

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

... Municipal Officers ...

OF THE

TOWN OF PERU,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING

FEBRUARY 20, 1900.

RUMFORD FALLS:
TIMES BOOK AND JOB PRINT,
1900.

Report of Selectmen.

To the citizens of Peru:

Your selectmen respectfully submit the following condition of the town, showing the receipts and expenditures from Feb. 20, 1899 to Feb. 20, 1900.

VALUATION.

Resident real estate,	\$137,138 00
“ personal estate,	39,165 00
Non-resident real estate,	27,675 00
“ personal estate,	1,187 00
	<hr/> \$205,165 00

APPROPRIATED AND ASSESSED.

Voted by town, state tax,	\$ 682 34
“ “ county tax,	418 28
“ “ schools,	605 00
“ “ roads and bridges,	2,000 00
“ “ to defray town charges,	1,500 00
“ “ for free High School,	150 00
“ “ repairs on school houses,	150 00
“ “ For school books,	75 00
Fractional overlay,	176 84
	<hr/> \$5,757 46

No. of polls, 218; rate of poll tax, \$1.00;
amount of poll tax, \$ 218 00
Rate of property tax, 27 mills on the
dollar. Amount of property tax, 5,539 46

Total commitment to Wallace E. Hammond, collector, \$5,757 46

TOWN FARM ACCOUNT.

EXPENSES OF POOR ON THE TOWN FARM.

We have leased the town farm and personal property thereon to A. B. McIntire for one year ending April 6, 1900. He is to support Lenora P. Knight. He is to leave the farm and personal property in as good condition as he received it.

 SCHEDULE OF STOCK, ETC., ON THE FARM.

3 cows.

12 hens.

100 pounds pork.

Hay to winter out the stock, and farming tools and household furniture, etc., the same as last year.

EXPENDITURES.

Paid John Wyman for lumber and shingles,	\$5 92
E. S. Newton, staples for barn,	60
W. S. Walker, grass seed, wire, lead pipe and hardware for repairs about the buildings,	15 46
	<hr/>
Balance against the farm,	\$21 98

 EXPENSES OF POOR NOT ON THE FARM.

Paid support of W. M. Knight at Augusta,	\$134 26
care and burial expenses of A. S. Cox,	46 25
for George A. Poland and family,	46 70
for F. J. Wing,	19 00
	<hr/>

Expenses of the poor of the town of Peru,	\$246 21
Adding balance against town farm,	21 98
	<hr/>
	\$268 19

Paid expenses of poor of other towns:	
W. H. Cone,	\$104 00
Columbus Wing,	68 47
	<hr/>
	\$172 47

Total expenses of poor for 1899,	\$440 66
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TREASURER'S ACCOUNT.

W. S. Walker, Treasurer of Peru.

——DR——

Feb. 15, 1899.	To amt. due on W. E. Hammond's bills of '98,	\$3,955 86
" " "	To amt. Tax deeds on hand,	298 42
" " "	" " Cash on hand,	282 27
Mch. 4,	" " " for use of hall,	2 00
" 21,	" " " from town of Gray,	9 95
April 22,	" " Tax bills of W. E. Hammond's, 1899,	5,757 46
May 1,	" To amt. cash from Skowhegan,	26 00
July 13,	" " Town Clerk for dog licenses,	42 00
Aug. 7,	" To amt. cash from Skowhegan,	26 00
" 10,	" " cash from M. Hall for one jug sold,	20
Nov. 6,	" To amt. cash from Skowhegan,	26 00
" 6,	" " cash for tax deeds redeemed and interest,	2 86
Jan. 8, 1900.	To amt. cash State school fund,	551 76
Feb. 5,	" " cash from Skowhegan,	26 00
" 9,	" " cash on acct. of State paupers,	68 47
" 15,	" To amt. cash from Selectmen for sale of A. S. Knox's goods,	5 50
" " "	To amt. cash from selectmen for rent of town hall,	35 00
" " "	To amt. cash from selectmen for rent of ferry,	3 19
" " "	To amt. cash from State on acct. of dog licenses,	28 11
		<hr/>
		\$11,147 05

——CR.——

Feb. 15, 1900.	By amt. due on W. E. Hammond's bills, 1898,	\$ 4,043 46
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Feb. 15, 1900.	By amt. tax deeds on hand,	326 49
" " "	By amt. orders and receipts turned over,	6,063 95
" " "	By amt. cash on hand,	713 15
		<hr/>
		\$11,147 05

ROADS AND BRIDGES.

Amount voted by town for roads and bridges, \$2,000 00.

There has been expended on roads and bridges

previous to March, 1899, \$258 74

Expended by George L. Rowe, Commissioner:

March, 1899,	\$ 35 13
April, "	4 78
May, "	95 08
June, "	261 47
August, "	15 85
Sept., "	5 10
January and February, 1900, to date,	105 62
	<hr/>
	\$523 03

Expended by Stephen A. Getchell, Commissioner:

March, 1899,	\$ 32 80
April, "	3 40
May, "	175 09
June, "	233 02
Nov., "	10 54
Jan., 1900,	34 57
Feb., to date,	31 78
	<hr/>
	\$521 20

Expended by Granville Childs, Commissioner:

March, 1899,	\$ 82 47
May, "	123 01
Oct., "	53 28
January and February, 1900, to date,	126 84
	<hr/>
	\$ 385 60

Total amount expended on roads and bridges, \$1,688 57

SCHOOLS.

Amt. raised for support of schools,	\$605 00
“ apportioned from State,	551 76
Interest on permanent school fund,	34 38
Unexpended balance from 1898,	2 78
	<hr/> \$1,193 92

EXPENDITURES.

Teaching,	\$722 50
Board,	300 25
Wood,	50 50
Janitors' services,	9 75
Conveying scholars,	98 00
	<hr/> \$1,181 00
Balance unexpended,	\$12 92

FREE HIGH SCHOOL.

Amt raised by town,	\$150 00
“ due from State,	150 00
	<hr/> \$300 00
Expended for fall term, \$150 00.	

ABATEMENTS.

Poll, Horace A. Clark,	1898,	\$ 1 00
“ Warren F. Curtis,	“	1 00
“ Hiram Howard,	“	1 00
“ Wm. Hartsgrove,	“	1 00
“ J. C. Houghton,	“	1 00
Real estate of Abel A. Davis,	“	5 60
Personal estate of Daniel Gammon,	“	1 71
Personal and poll of Joseph T. Hammond,		
paid in Mexico,		2 68
Stock in Bridge Co., over valued,		23 96
		<hr/> \$39 65

INCIDENTAL EXPENSES.

Vaccination tubes,	\$ 18 04
Wm. Pease, return of births and deaths from Jan. 15, 1895 to Feb. 15, 1900,	8 25
Wm. Pease for 23 vaccinations,	5 75
J. S. Sturtevant, 162 vaccinations.	40 50
J. S. Sturtevant, return of births and deaths,	2 50
S. F. Robinson for making tax deed,	50
For painting town building,	18 56
For cleaning town hall,	1 00
For repairs on tomb, <i>Lamp for town Hall</i>	2 00
Blank books for town,	2 45
Cash paid out by selectmen,	5 46
For school books,	83 26
Repairs on school houses,	218 66
Estimated cost of printing town report,	10 00
W. S. Walker, express and postage,	1 20
W. S. Stillman, repairs on road machine,	4 10
Care of school house for fall term High school,	1 50
Apparatus and appliances,	2 60
F. B. Nelson, cash paid out for stationery, postage, etc.,	7 15
Wood for High school, fall term,	2 00
	<hr/>
	\$435 48

TOWN OFFICER'S BILLS.

Due S. F. Robinson, town clerk,	10 56
W. S. Walker, treasurer,	30 00
James W. Gowell, selectman, assessor, etc.,	51 50
H. R. Robinson, selectman, assessor, etc.,	33 00
Charles J. Tracy, selectman, assessor, etc.,	21 50

Paid F. B. Nelson, supervision of schools,	35 00
Due " " " "	65 00
" Wallace E. Hammond, collector for 1899,	103 63
	<hr/> \$350 19
M. Hall, board of health for 1898,	2 50
Benjamin Lovejoy, board of health for '98.	
O. O. Tracy, " " "	
M. Hall, truant officer,	5 00
	<hr/> \$357 69

CURRENT EXPENSES.

Expenses of poor for 1899,	\$ 440 86
Expended on roads and bridges,	1,688 57
Orders of abatements,	38 95
Incidental expenses,	435 48
Town officers' bills,	357 69
Interest on permanent school fund,	34 38
" accrued during the year,	136 52
	<hr/> \$3,132 45

RECEIPTS.

Amt. voted by town to defray town charges,	\$1,500 00
Amt. voted by town for roads and bridges,	2,000 00
Amt. voted by town for repairs of school houses,	150 00
Amt. voted by town for school books, of overlay,	75 00 176 84
from State on acct. dog licenses,	28 11
Skowhegan for Wm. Cone,	104 00
State for State paupers,	68 47
estate of A. S. Knox,	5 50
rent of town hall,	37 00
" ferry,	3 19
M. Hall for one jug sold,	20
	<hr/> \$4,148 31
Balance in favor of 1899,	\$1,015 16

FINANCIAL CONDITION OF TOWN.

LIABILITIES.

Outstanding orders bearing interest,	\$3,217 00	
Interest due Feb. 20, 1900,	83 60	
Orders not on interest,	681 39	
Due the town schools,	12 92	
Due on town officers bills, 1899,	322 69	
Estimated cost of printing this report,	10 00	
	<hr/>	\$4,327 60

ASSETS.

In hands of treasurer,	\$5,083 10	
Town farm and personal property,	600 00	
	<hr/>	\$5,683 10
Assets more than liabilities,		\$1,355 50

All of which is respectfully submitted,

JAMES W. GOWELL,	} <i>Selectmen</i>
H. R. ROBINSON,	
	<i>of</i>
	<i>Peru.</i>

Superintendent's Report.

Suggestions and Recommendations Relating to the Public Schools in the Town of Peru:

The importance of providing our children and young people with schooling suited to their needs can hardly be over-estimated. Emphasis should be placed on the demands of the present and the tendencies of the future in relation to educational matters. What was once deemed sufficient will now no longer serve the purpose. The rising generation calls for better school facilities, more improved methods of teaching, and a higher training even for the ordinary pursuits of life. Attention is called to a few suggestions and recommendations which endeavor to meet the educational needs of our town.

PARENTS.—That fathers and mothers should be interested in the mental and moral improvement of their children is self-evident. But how should this interest be shown? By a thoughtful regard for the welfare of other people's boys and girls, a sympathetic co-operation with teachers and school officers, and an intelligent effort to improve the schools in every possible way. Parents may do much towards inculcating kindness of speech and gentleness of bearing in the school room and on the play ground. Frequent visitation from parents, both in their own and in other districts, are of especial value. A friendly acquaintance between parents and teachers is established, and the latter have a chance to observe both the physical and moral surroundings of their children.

OLDER PUPILS.—As in the home so in the school, next to the parents comes the influence of older brothers

and sisters. No where more than in school do young pupils imbibe the spirit of their elders. If the latter set a worthy example in devotion to study and excellence in deportment, the lower classes cannot fail to be benefitted.

TEACHERS.—That suitable instructors intellectually and morally should be employed goes without saying; but unless parents and pupils co-operate, partial success or utter failure will be the inevitable result. The word “suitable” has a relative sense. A teacher may be better fitted for one school than for another. Then, too, the ungraded condition of our schools furnish no little trouble in this direction. When Primary, Grammar and High School studies are required to be taught by the same teacher, failure in some one of these must follow. No teacher is sufficiently well suited to teach all grades with equal success. It is not always possible to hire trained teachers with the wages available, and experience comes only with practice in the school room. The teachers employed the past year have certainly made praise-worthy efforts to improve themselves and benefit their pupils. Honorable mention is to be accorded our resident teachers and the students from Bates College.

SUPERINTENDENT’S WORK.—Comparatively few stop to consider the actual responsibility of this office. The majority of people do not try to put themselves in this trying position. If charges should be made such as the law allows for work actually done the past year adverse criticism would find no limits. According to Hon. W. W. Stetson, a superintendent’s day is the same as a teacher’s. All time spent in school business in any way whatsoever, whether at the desk, on the road, or in visiting schools, may be charged. The time spent in writing to teachers, buying materials for repairs, purchasing supplies and books, amounts in a year to more than one would think. Then, also, the work of distributing books where needed at the

beginning of each term is a burden not lightly to be assumed.

EXPERT SUPERINTENDENCY.—It must be evident that the provision whereby two or more towns, having altogether twenty-five schools at least, may unite in employing the services of an experienced superintendent is right in principle. This law derives its forcible appeal from the fact that agricultural, medical, legal, and ministerial pursuits must necessarily at times conflict with a superintendent's duties if attempted by one and the same man at the same time. Clearly this is what one tries to do who has another occupation beside the superintendency. Objections may be raised which may be convincingly met only by a trial of the plan. A testing of the benevolent intent of this law in our town for the coming year will probably result in satisfying us of the feasibility and utility of this arrangement.

SCHOOL BOOKS.—The best of superintendents would find himself handicapped if this town does not purchase more books and preserve them better. The disagreeable necessity of superintendents being obliged to carry books from school to school on account of such a small yearly appropriation is a waste of both time and money. Books in number sufficient to cover all possible need in each school should be purchased when a change is made this spring. Book cases for the preservation of all school room supplies should be in each. Deposits covering the cost of books loaned to pupils should be placed by parents in the hands of the superintendent, so that the town may be insured against loss by people moving away or older pupils ceasing to attend. Teachers and parents should caution the children against disfiguring books, and as far as possible secure the same books for the same pupils from term to term. The preservation of books and the healthfulness of the children would be thereby enhanced. More elementary text books should be selected. The superintendent this coming year should catalogue in a special record book the

number and kind of each book, map and globe placed in each school house, and faithful records should be made each succeeding year to prevent loss of books.

SCHOOL HOUSES AND GROUNDS.—Repairs have been made in this and in recent years, but much remains yet to be done. Our school rooms are unadorned, our grounds are unsightly yards, and the out buildings are filthy abominations. In a majority of instances is this true, and in no case is the arrangement of school buildings and out-houses according to our State superintendent's plan as described in his report of 1896. It is an unpleasant fact that our school buildings are in the public highways and even, those are turned into wood and lumber yards. When these yards are changed into lawns, these barns into cottages, these stables into respectable out-houses, and the bare rooms into cosy sitting-rooms, it will be apparent that Peru is educationally reformed.

GRADED SCHOOLS.—It is a fact that our leading educators urge the formation of such schools. Therefore it is strongly recommended that the new school house in Franklin Annex be moved to Dickvale and that there a graded school be established. The pupils of Knox school could be conveyed to that place. Union hall at West Peru should be purchased by the town for a school room and a graded school be formed there. Ridge school pupils could very conveniently come to West Peru. The school at the latter place is so large as to need two teachers as it is. At least, the Knox and Ridge schools should be consolidated and a school house built somewhere near the town farm. The former plan of consolidation and grading is by far the more preferable and progressive. The work of grading and consolidation should go on until something more like perfection than we now have is reached. This would involve more conveyance of pupils. A covered easy wagon with a safe driver and one of the teachers as conductor would insure the confidence of parents and the best welfare of the children.

FREE HIGH SCHOOL.—Although this has been a source of annoyance to school officials and a bone of contention for the people, it is nevertheless certain that the principle of this law is right. If it is not sustained in the coming years it will be because the benevolent intention of the State is not appreciated by the people of this town. This has been an experimental stage of our High School's growth, and yet it has furnished an intellectual stimulus sufficient to cause many of our young people to thirst for a higher education. Even if the arrangement followed this year is not the most satisfactory, yet are not two terms of ten weeks each of High School preferable to none at all? It must be remembered that the State pays for half the instruction and board. With one term at Peru Center and one at West Peru, students could enter academies and other High Schools one or two years ahead, according to the time spent here. It might be better to hold the winter term at Peru Center. Prin. H. C. Small exerted himself to the utmost for the advancement of his pupils, and Prin. L. G. Glidden, now teaching our second term of High School, has, without doubt, the best school ever taught in town.

VOTERS.—After all that may be said, it is the holder of the ballot that has the power to hasten or retard the reforms suggested in this report. By a short sighted policy you may make your appropriations altogether too small. Does a large tax bill before your eyes shut out the vision of your children's mental and moral development? Or if you have no pupil to send to school, do you say, it is nothing to me? Public spirit and love for other men's children should move you to cast a vote for educational progress. Voters of this town, do you care for your schools and school buildings as much as you do for your homes? And why should you not? Your children are at school the greater part of the formative period of their lives. Be generous, therefore, with your means to the point of sacrifice for their sake.

CLOSING REMARKS WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPROPRIATIONS.—The usual financial statement is purposely omitted, as it is found in the reports of the other town officers. Seven summer schools of nine weeks each and seven winter schools of eleven weeks each, have been taught, besides ten weeks of high school last fall and nearly two weeks this winter, by the following teachers: Mr. Joseph A. Putnam, Miss Ada E. Gerrish, Miss Bertha Goggin, Mrs. F. L. Phinney, Miss Nellie Tracy, residents, who have either graduated from normal schools or have studied normal methods; Miss Nettie L. Thurston, a teacher employed in town before; Miss Maude E. Hooper, a graduate from Biddeford high school; Mr. Fred C. Closson, a student of West Lebanon high school; Mr. Geo. S. Holman, Mr. Herman H. Stuart, and Mr. Earle A. Childs, students in Bates college; Prin. H. C. Small, a graduate from Bates college, and Prin. L. G. Glidden, a student from the senior class of that institution.

The following appropriations are necessary for the ensuing year: \$300 for repairs, as this account is already overdrawn by the amount of \$68.66; \$200 for books, since this account is already overdrawn, owing to the necessary purchase of high school books. The coming year will demand more as the contract on nearly all the books expires the third of next May.

Respectfully submitted,

REV. F. V. NELSON, *Supt. of Schools.*